



*Office of the United States Attorney
Amul R. Thapar
Eastern District of Kentucky*

Whitley County Man Pleads Guilty to Receiving and Distributing Child Pornography

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LONDON, Ky. — Derek Hodge, 37, of Corbin, Ky., pleaded guilty to receiving or distributing child pornography before United States District Court Judge Danny C. Reeves, announced U.S. Attorney Amul R. Thapar. Hodge was indicted in November of last year.

In the course of his guilty plea, Hodge admitted from about November of 2005 through March of 2006, in Whitley County, he knowingly received numerous images of minors engaged in various forms of sexually explicit conduct. Hodge received the images via computer, including by numerous subscriptions to “newsgroups,” and admitted that these images portrayed children ranging in age from infants to teenagers.

Hodge faces a minimum of five years and up to 20 years in prison, a maximum fine of \$250,000 and supervised release for up to life. Hodge’s sentencing is currently scheduled for May 21, 2007 at 1:30 p.m. in United States District Court in London, Ky.

The investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Corbin Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Erin J. May represented the United States in the case.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.

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